

which we find more difficulty in forgiving than one against ourselves. It would be impossible to see such a noble tree as the Crawley Elm felled without regret;—its aged head brought prostrate to the ground, its still green branches despoiled in the dust, its spreading roots left bare and desolate. The old would miss it, as the object that brought back to them the recollections of their youth; the young would lament for it, as having hoped to talk of it when they should be old themselves. The traveller who had heard of its beauty would look for it in vain, to beguile him on the road; and the weary wanderer, returning to his long-left home, would scarcely know his paternal roof when robbed of the shade of the branches which he had seen wave even before his cradle. A stately forest is one of the grandest sights in creation; an insulated tree, one of the most beautiful. In the deep recesses of a wood an aged tree commands a veneration, similar to that which we are early taught to feel towards the possessor of royalty, or the minister of religion; but in a hamlet, or on a green, we regard it with the gentler reverence due to a parent, or the affection inspired by the presence of a long-tried friend.

PLATE XXXIII.—THE OAKS AT BURLEY,

CALLED

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

THIS fine group of Oaks, twelve in number, stands on the lawn at Burley Lodge, New Forest, the property of Lord Bolton. The largest of them is seven yards and a half in circumference. They are known by the name of the Twelve Apostles, and perhaps this designation unconsciously adds to the feelings of reverence and regard which their venerable appearance, and their proximity to each other, as if drawn together by bonds of friendship, are calculated to inspire. There is a solemnity in a group of ancient trees that irresistibly disposes the mind to serious thought, and carries it back to former ages:

"It seems idolatry with some excuse
When our forefather Druids in their oaks
Imagined sanctity. The conscience, yet,
Unpurged by an authentic act

Of amnesty, the meed of blood divine,
Loved not the light, but, gloomy, into gloom
Of thickest shades, like Adam after taste
Of fruit proscribed, as to a refuge fled."—COWPER.

Chardin, who published his Travels in Turkey in the 17th century, remarks, that the religious Mahometans chose to pray under old trees, rather than in the neighbouring mosques: "They devoutly reverence," says he, "those trees which seem to have existed during many ages; piously believing that the holy men of former times had prayed and meditated under their umbrageous shade." With such feelings, no wonder that they place their highest gratification in reclining under the widely-spreading branches of some fine tree, and regard the destruction of one as an act of sacrilege.

The beautiful forest scenery with which the Oaks at Burley are surrounded on every side, predispose the lover of sylvan objects to be pleased with them, at the same time that they awaken in his breast an ardent desire to see every tree that bows its head to the earth, either by natural decay, by the fury of the elements, or the more furious and un pitying axe, replaced by a whole group of successors. "The value of timber," says Gilpin, "is its misfortune: every graceless hand can fell a tree." But the hand that fells an oak can likewise plant an acorn; and this restitution to mother earth is surely due from those who despoil her of her noblest and most ancient treasures, to satisfy some low necessity of the passing moment. Sir Robert Walpole planted with his own hands many of the magnificent trees which are now the pride of Houghton; and of all the actions of his busy life, this is one which seems to have given him most gratification in the performance, and most pleasure in the retrospect. "Men," says Evelyn, "seldom plant trees till they begin to be wise; that is, till they grow old, and find by experience the prudence and necessity of it." Cicero mentions planting as one of the most delightful occupations of old age, and it is indeed of all pursuits connected with the interests of mankind, one of the most nobly disinterested, yet the most truly wise. He who puts a sapling into the ground, is morally certain that he shall not live to enjoy the shade of its matured branches; but he enjoys it every day, and a thousand fold, in the thought, that the land, which to his predecessors had been only a barren waste, will present to his successors a scene of waving beauty, sheltering the surrounding country, and inviting many a devious step to